



# 2014 Annual Report

Oscar G. Johnson VA Medical Center

*Focused on Excellence - Putting Veterans First*



## Message from the Director



**James W. Rice**  
Medical Center Director



**Clifford A. Smith, PhD**  
Associate Director



**Gail M. McNutt, MD**  
Chief of Staff



**Andrea S. Collins, RN**  
Associate Director,  
Nursing & Patient Care

It is my privilege to present to you the Oscar G. Johnson VA Medical Center's 2014 annual report. Our motto, *Focused on Excellence – Putting Veterans First*, reflects our goal to be the health care of choice for Veterans and recognized as a leader in rural health care.

When I came to OGJVMC in 2011, we began to develop our strategic plan for the medical center, with the ultimate goal in mind of being recognized as the "Leaders in Rural Health." The last four years we have been devoting our energy and resources to pursuing those things we do best and the results have been impressive: a 5-star rating in quality; recognized by the Joint Commission as a top performer three of the last four years; 82 percent of our Veterans would recommend our VA Medical Center to their family or friends, which ranks us fourth of all VA Medical Centers; and 81 percent of our Veterans gave us a score of 9 or 10 in the Overall Rating of Hospital Stay metric, which ranks us third in the nation. These achievements are a testament to our hard working employees and volunteers who serve our nation's Veterans every day.

As you read this report, you will notice that we strive every day to deliver the right care at the right time that is personalized, proactive and patient-driven for all Veterans. This care is delivered by our well-trained, talented staff using state-of-the-art technologies. However, we are not standing still. We continue to pursue excellence as we journey toward developing a culture of patient-centered care and redefining the patient experience.

James W. Rice  
Medical Center Director



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Hancock, MI



Ironwood, MI



Manistique, MI



Marquette, MI



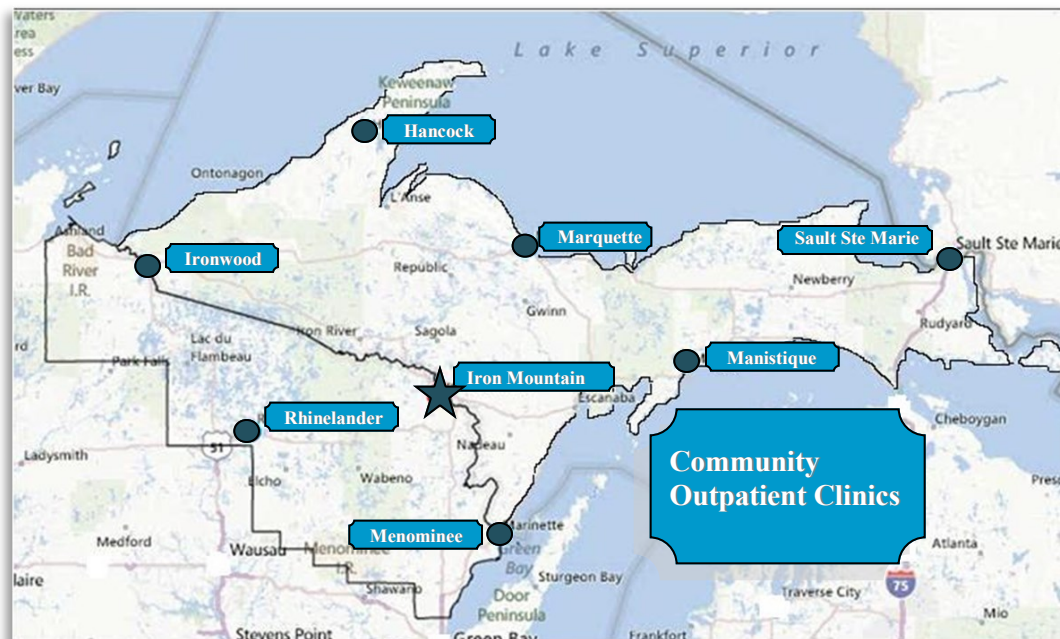
Menominee, MI



Rhinelander, WI



Sault Ste Marie, MI





## OGJVAMC's Log Cabin

### Mission:

**Honor America's Veterans by providing exceptional healthcare that improves their health and well-being.**

### Vision:

**Leaders in Rural Healthcare - Focused on Excellence - Putting Veterans First.**

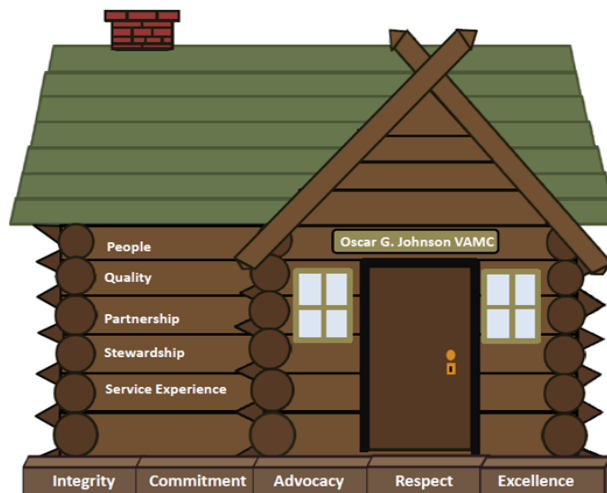
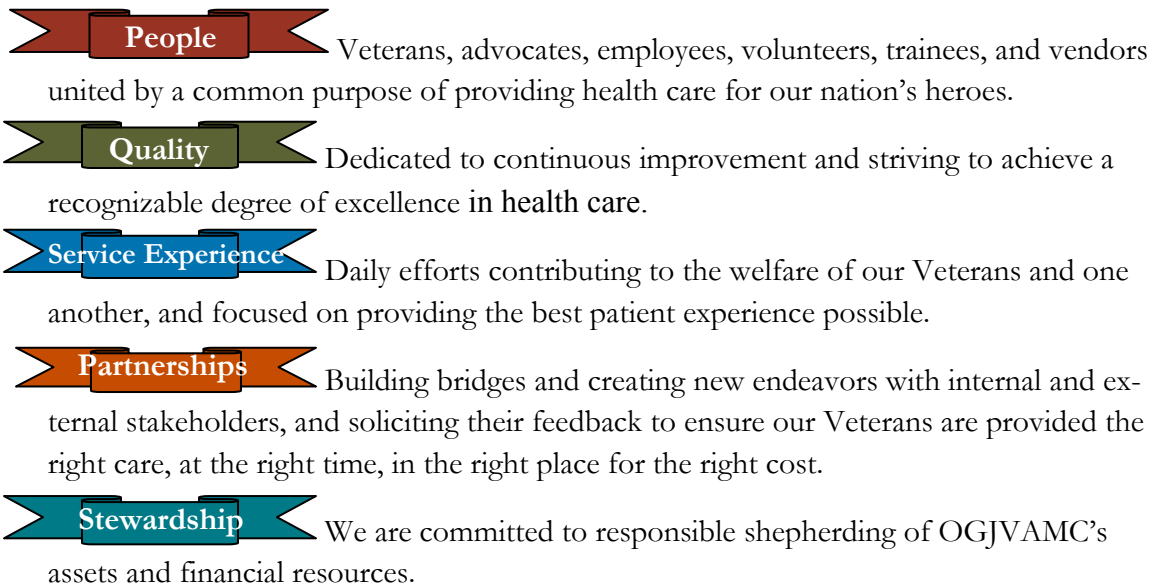
### Motto:

**Focused on Excellence - Putting Veterans First.**

Over the last two years OGJVAMC developed a strategic plan and revised its mission and vision statements, best summed up in its motto, *Focused on Excellence - Putting Veterans First*. The goal of OGJVAMC is to remain a leader in rural health care, and a provider and employer of choice.

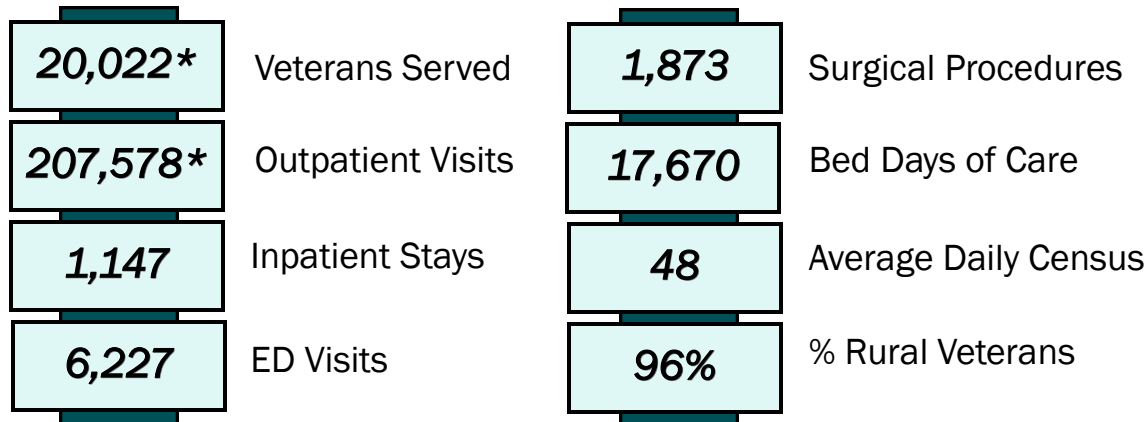
To best illustrate OGJVAMC's strategic way forward, a log cabin was "built." The *foundation* of OGJVAMC's log cabin is the VA Core Values of I CARE (Integrity, Commitment, Advocacy, Respect, and Ex-

cellence). These core values, i.e., "who we are," are the base elements of how we go about our work, how we interact with each other, and which strategies we employ to fulfill our mission. Most importantly, they are the principles we use every day in everything we do. The *columns* of the log cabin are OGJVAMC's guiding principles, the main strategic direction to achieve the mission and realize the vision. These are:



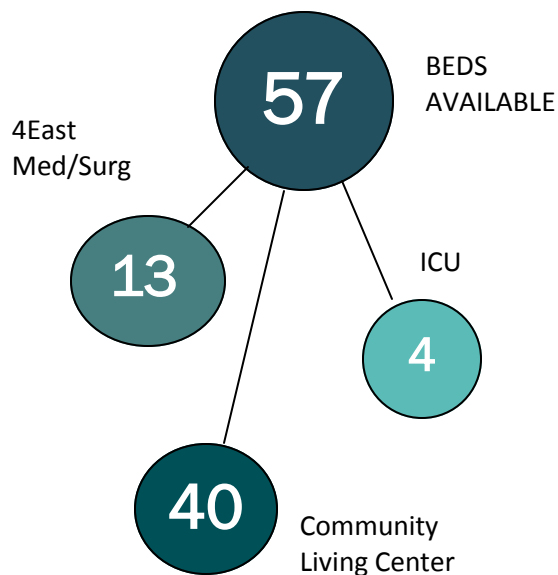
## OGJVMC at a Glance

### Clinical Statistics



\* Includes Community Outpatient/Rural Outreach Clinics

### Operating Beds



### FY 2014 Budget

**\$131.2M** Operating Budget

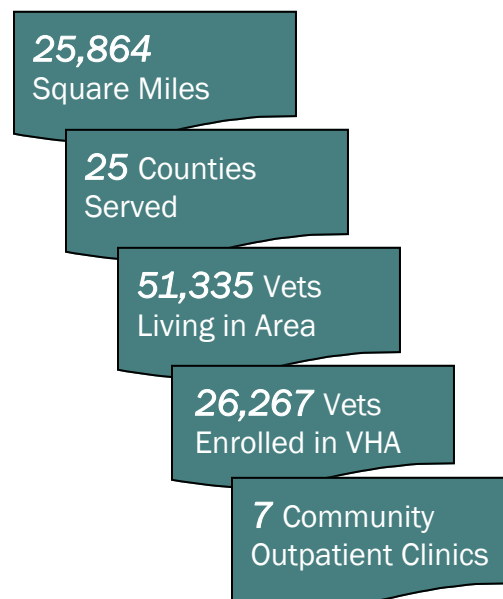
**\$6.2M** Construction Funds

**\$1.0M** Rural Health Funds

### Staffing

- ★ **686** Employees
- ★ **31%** Veteran Employees
- ★ **39** Licensed Physicians
- ★ **93** Total Providers
- ★ **217** Nurses
- ★ **62** Mental Health Professionals

### Demographics



## Our Most Valuable Resource

The honors and accreditations on page 10, patient satisfaction scores on page 11, and clinical measures throughout this report would not be possible without our most valuable resource – **PEOPLE**. These honors and achievements are a testament to OGJVAMC employees – from housekeepers to clinical providers - and volunteers

for their commitment to Veterans and fulfilling our motto, "Focused on Excellence - Putting Veterans First." Additionally, our employees are on the forefront as we continue our journey providing our Veterans with *personal, proactive, and patient-driven care* (see page 12).



*These honors and achievements are a testament to OGJVAMC employees – from housekeepers to clinical providers - and volunteers and their commitment to Veterans.*



## Our Most Valuable Resource



## VA Employees Helping the Community

### Adopt-a-Family



Gifts donated & delivered to **7 families** during the holiday season.

### CFC



Raised **\$24,802** for the 2014 **Combined Federal Campaign** to help people in the community.



## Developing Current & Future Employees

OGJVAMC continues to pursue opportunities to prepare the next generation of VA employees and leaders through leadership programs, intern opportunities, and VA career fairs for local high school students (*see page 23*).

### RN Transition-to-Practice Program

OGJVAMC graduated two nurses from its Registered Nurse Transition-to-Practice Program. The 12-month program uses a comprehensive VA curriculum designed to assist the post-graduate nurse in the transition from entry-level advanced beginner nurse to competent nursing professional. Graduates provide a briefing to OGJVAMC executive leaders on their program research project.

### Psychology Internship Program

In 2014, OGJVAMC received accreditation with the American Psychological Association (APA) for its Pre-Doctoral Internship in Psychology program and graduated its second class of Pre-Doctoral Interns in Psychology.



### Pathways & National Diversity Internship Programs

OGJVAMC hosted 12 student interns in 2014, providing hands on experience in clinical and administrative careers. [Pathways](http://mycareeratva.va.gov/Careerpath/Internships/Pages/default.aspx) emphasizes long-term development and the diversity internship recruits from various organizations that conduct targeted outreach to diverse student populations. Both programs provide opportunities to become a VA employee. For more information on internships: <http://mycareeratva.va.gov/Careerpath/Internships/Pages/default.aspx>



*OGJVAMC continues to pursue opportunities to prepare the next generation of VA employees and leaders.*



## Volunteers are a Force Multiplier

OGJVAMC volunteers are a force multiplier, providing 44,811 hours of service in 2014, which is the equivalent of 24 full-time employees.

These volunteers provide invaluable support to program areas such as Recreation Therapy, Nursing and Patient Care, Outpatient, Chaplain Service, Pharmacy, Library, Human Resources, Voluntary Service, Veteran Transportation, Pet Therapy, Volunteer Escorts, and Butterfly Wish Program.

The 147 volunteer drivers in the Veterans Transportation Network logged 288,566 miles transporting 2,606 Veterans to and from their VA appointments.

Volunteers have been instrumental in conducting over 30 special events, outings, and ceremonies for the benefit of Veteran patients. These include the annual Patient Carnival, Memorial Day Tribute Ride, Holiday Gift Shop, VA2K Walk, Memorial Day and Veterans Day ceremonies, numerous activities and outings for the CLC residents, and the immensely popular Feeding America food distribution (see article below).



### 2014 OGJVAMC Volunteers

- 444 Volunteers\*
- 33 Youth Volunteers
- 44,811 Hours served
- \$856,562 Equivalent labor costs
- 24 Equivalent full time employees
- 288,566 Miles driven by volunteers transporting Veterans

\* Does not include volunteers at Jacobetti State Home (as in past reports)

## OGJVAMC Hosts Food Distribution



Forty thousand pounds of food were given to over 1,000 Veterans and their families at a food distribution event hosted by OGJVAMC on September 3, 2014. The event was coordinated by the Seventh Day Adventist Food Pantry in Escanaba and the Patriot Guard Riders, and the food was provided by Feeding America of West Michigan. Its CEO said this was the largest food distribution they have ever done. To make it happen, over 60 volunteers set up the food distribution tables and handed out the food. *For more photos click [here](#).*

For media stories, check out: <http://www.uppermichiganssource.com/news/story.aspx?id=1091932>



## **OGJVAMC Services Recognized**



### ***The Joint Commission Top Performer***

OGJVAMC is one of 1,224 U.S. hospitals earning the distinction of Top Performers on Key Quality Measures™. Only 24 other VA medical facilities were recognized. This is the third time in four years OGJVAMC has been recognized with this award.



### ***Quality and Efficiency***

OGJVAMC has consistently scored 4 and 5 stars in quality and efficiency in the Strategic Analytics for Improvement and Learning (SAIL) Model each quarter, ending Fiscal Year 2014 with 5 stars in quality and 4 stars in efficiency.



### ***Accreditation from The Joint Commission***

OGJVAMC received accreditation from The Joint Commission for the Hospital, Home Care Program, Behavioral Health Care Program, and Long Term Care Program. The Joint Commission is the leading accreditor of health care organizations in America.



### ***Accreditation from CARF International***

OGJVAMC's Healthcare for Homeless Veterans (HCHV) Program received accreditation from CARF International, an independent nonprofit organization that accredits specialized services. The CARF inspection and survey made no recommendations, which is an extraordinary achievement as only three percent of CARF surveys result in no recommendations.



### ***Accreditation from College of American Pathologists***

OGJVAMC's Pathology and Laboratory Service received accreditation from the College of American Pathologists (CAP), and is now one of more than 7,000 CAP-accredited facilities worldwide. The U.S. federal government recognizes the CAP Laboratory Accreditation Program as being equal to or more stringent than the government's own inspection program.



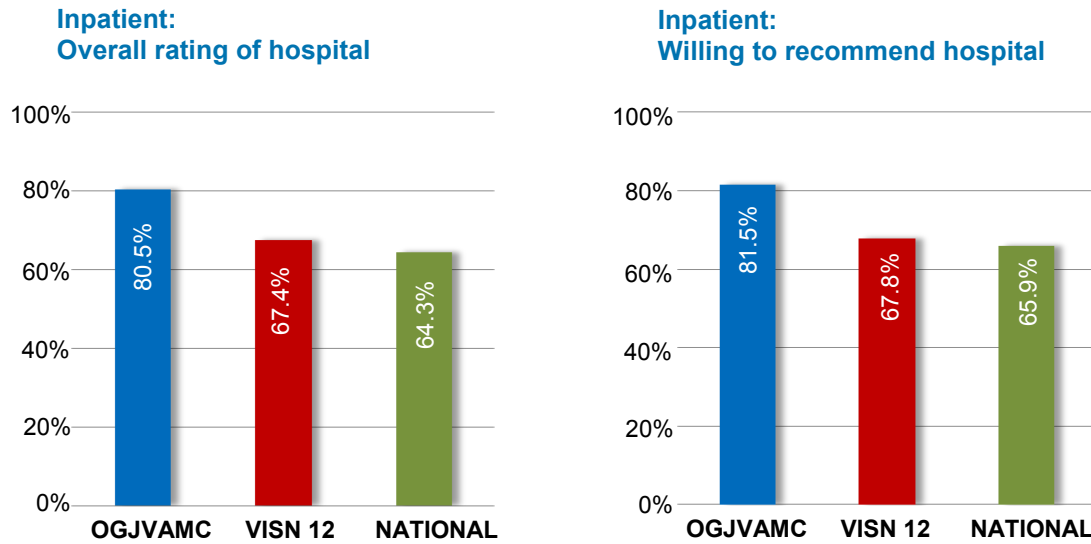
### ***RCA Cornerstone Silver Award***

OGJVAMC received the 2014 RCA (Root Cause Analysis) Cornerstone Silver Award from the VA National Center for Patient Safety. OGJVAMC completed 8 RCAs and 10 safety alerts/advisories and 100 percent were completed on time.

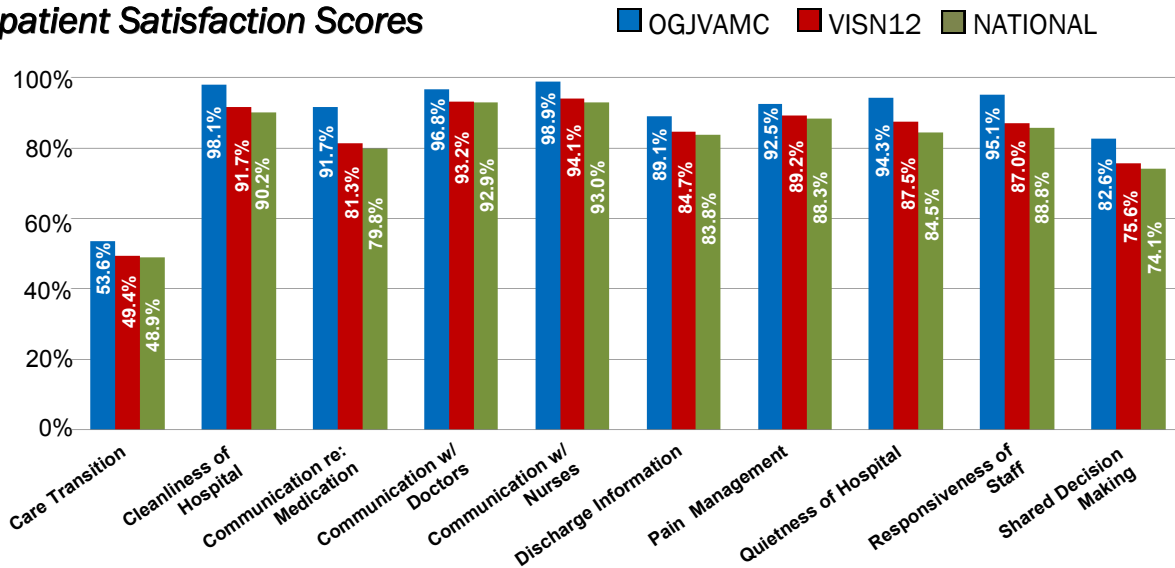


# Patient Satisfaction

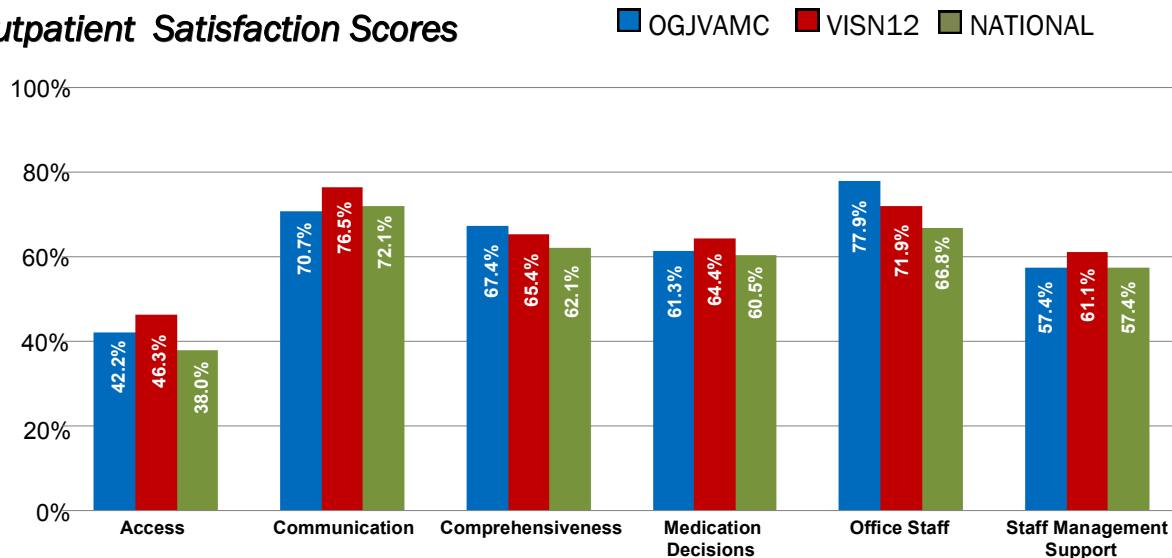
## Overall Rating of OGJVAMC



## Inpatient Satisfaction Scores



## Outpatient Satisfaction Scores



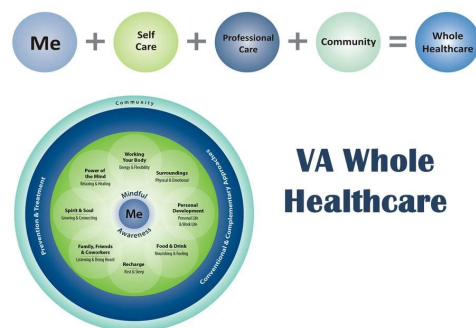
# Journey Toward Patient-Centered Care <sup>Year 2</sup>

OGJVAMC has embarked on a journey to provide *personalized, proactive, patient-centered care*, which is critically important as OGJVAMC strives to be a leader in rural health care and provider of choice for Veterans in the U.P. and northern Wisconsin.

So what is *Patient-Centered Care*? Built on VA's core values of Integrity, Commitment, Advocacy, Respect, and Excellence (I CARE), patient-centered care combines the clinical practice of medicine with personalized, proactive care and includes complementary approaches. Care is provided through a patient-driven health care team within healing environments and relationships.

It is the VA treating the whole health of a Veteran—physical, mental, emotional and spiritual— and taking into account self care, professional care, and community relationships. It is often illustrated as a circle with the Veteran at the center followed by self care, professional care and then community.

OGJVAMC has partnered with the national VA Office of Patient-Centered Care and Cultural Transformation (OPCC&CT) to train leadership and employees in the PCC&CT model. Teams from the national office provided full day engagement sessions for leadership, as well as extensive training



for 14 staff, who serve as PCC&CT champions. These staff members now provide day long PCC&CT engagement sessions to ensure that employees are well-versed in the patient-centered care model. Over the next year, the goal is for all employees to attend these sessions, and for all staff to be champions of PCC&CT.

OGJVAMC has already initiated programs to improve the experience of Veterans, and provide care for their whole health. Some recent initiatives include: Hiring a full-time Chaplain for spiritual support, acupuncture services, free food distribution, Tai Chi classes, kiosks for easy check-in, personalized video options for inpatients, as well as offering a selective menu, including regional favorites like Pasties.

In 2015, OGJVAMC will continue to implement the patient-centered care model with local initiatives that are focused on enhancing clinical *practice* and the overall *experience* of Veterans.

Veterans committed their lives, health, and well-being to mission success in defense of our country. Our goal is to design a system where we partner with our Veterans to be mission ready for their lives, optimizing their health in ways that matter to them most.

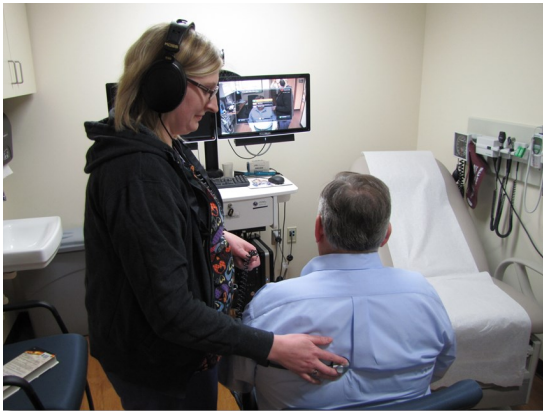
*Patient-centered care combines the clinical practice of medicine with personalized, proactive care and includes complementary approaches.*



## Expanding Telehealth Care

OGJVMC continues to expand state of the art telehealth audio/visual technology services to rural Veterans not close to a VA health care specialty provider. Telehealth services include Clinical Video Conferencing, Store and Forward, and Home Telehealth (see page 15).

The benefits of telehealth appointments are increased access to specialty care services not available locally and the reduced travel time and costs for the Veteran. However, telehealth is not meant to replace face-to-face care but rather to enhance the overall health care experience in a convenient, efficient and cost effective manner.

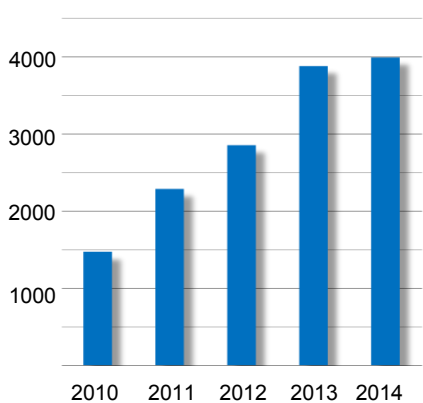


Feedback received from patients has been positive. “Our younger Veterans voice that it is much more convenient to take off one hour from their job to attend a telehealth appointment close to their home, rather than a full vacation day to travel to Iron Mountain or Milwaukee,” said Jeanne Johnson, Telehealth Coordinator at OGJVMC. “The alternative for some is to postpone their health care. Telehealth is helping to bridge this gap.”

### 30 clinics provide telehealth services:

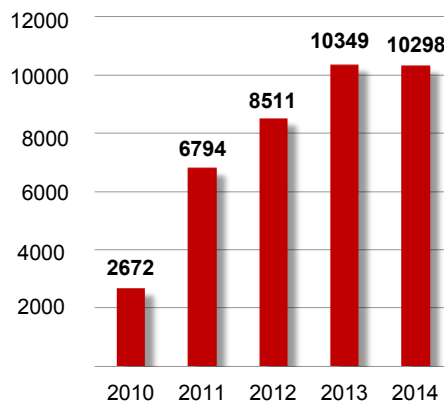
- Audiology
- Behavioral Health (Gen)
- Cardiac Device
- Cardiology
- Cardio Arrhythmia
- Comp & Pension (MH)
- Dermatology
- Diabetes
- Diabetic Education
- Endocrinology
- Home Based Care
- Infectious Disease
- Nephrology
- Nutrition
- Nutrition-Diabetes
- Peripheral Vascular Surgery
- Pharmacy
- Post-Op Surgery
- Pre-Natal
- Pre-Op Anesthesia
- Primary Care
- Prosthetics
- Psychiatry
- PTSD
- Pulmonology
- Retinal Imaging
- Rheumatology
- Social Work
- Spinal Cord Injury
- Substance Abuse
- Thoracic Surgery
- Weight Management
- Oxygen Renewal (2015)
- Spirometry (2015)

No. of patients using telehealth\*



\* Does not include Home Telehealth

No. of telehealth appointments\*



*“Our younger Veterans voice that it is more convenient to take off one hour from their job to attend a telehealth appointment rather than a full vacation day to travel to Iron Mountain or Milwaukee.”*

*~ Jeanne Johnson, RN, Telehealth Coordinator*

## PACT: Patient Aligned Care Teams

OGJVAMC uses the VA's Patient Aligned Care Team (PACT) Model, implemented in 2011, to provide patient-centric care. There are seven PACT teamlets at OGJVAMC and one to three teamlets at each of its six community Outpatient Clinics and one Rural Outreach Clinic.

**PACT is Team Based Care:** The Veteran works with a core team of health care professionals, known as a teamlet, which includes his or her physician, registered nurse, licensed practical nurse, and administrative clerk. A social worker, pharmacist, dietician and mental health professional may also be on the team. These health care professionals work together as a team to provide comprehensive care for each Veteran.

**PACT is a Veteran-Centric Partnership:** The Veteran and his or her teamlet work together to assess and treat the whole person, with an emphasis on lifelong preventive health and wellness. This partnership encourages open communication between the Veteran and his or her health care team.

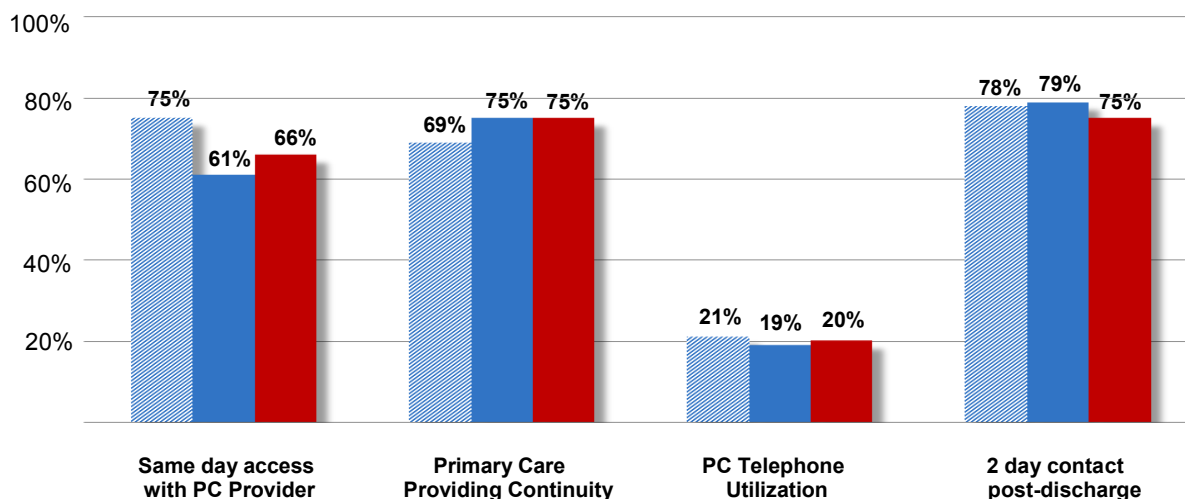
**PACT is Increased Access to Care:** The Veteran now has more options in communicating with his or her health care professionals and receiving care – Primary Care visits, telephone follow ups, secure messaging, telehealth appointments, and same day visits with his or her provider and other teamlet members such as the dietician, social worker and Circle of Care Clinic.

**PACT is Coordinated Care:** The teamlet coordinates all aspects of a Veteran's health care within the teamlet, with specialists in other services or non-VA providers, and during the transition from hospital care to ambulatory care. The objective is ensuring seamless coordination and continuity of care.



**PACT Clinical Measures for FY 2014**

OGJVAMC 2013 OGJVAMC 2014 Target



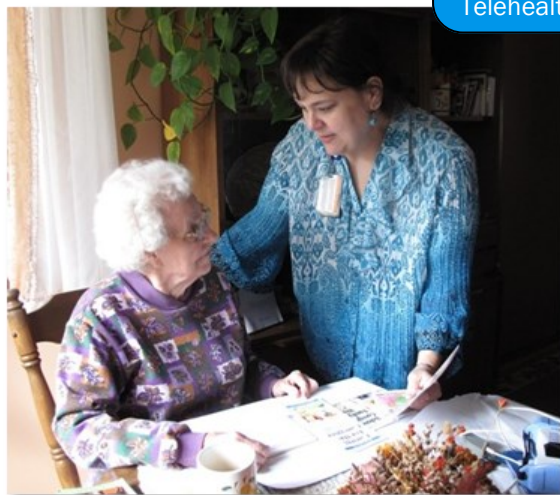


## Helping More Veterans Stay at Home

OGJVAMC has a comprehensive Home and Community Based Care (H&CBC) program that provides needed services to enable Veterans to remain in their home setting as long as possible. H&CBC programs may be provided singularly or in combination with other programs. Over 600 Veterans received H&CBC services throughout the year.

**Home Based Primary Care Care** brings health care to the comfort of the Veteran's home, providing routine care and continuous services for complex chronic disabling diseases. HBPC was started in 2008 and expanded to a second satellite team at Watersmeet, MI, in 2009. To date, the program has served over 400 Veterans.

**Home Telehealth Program** provides in-home monitoring and care coordination for Veterans with chronic diseases such as CHF, COPD, diabetes, and hypertension. The program has further expanded into supporting Veterans with behavioral health needs



**213** Average  
Daily Census

**320** Home  
Telehealth Veterans



such as PTSD, substance abuse, schizophrenia, tobacco cessation, weight management, and bipolar disorder. Care coordinators assist Veterans with navigating their healthcare and promoting self-management skills through education and case management.

**Coordinated-Transitional Care** is a new program designed to reduce 30-day re-hospitalizations and to im-

prove care transitions of patients who may not be accessible via post-hospital home visits. The goals of the program are to educate and empower the Veteran in medication management, ensure the Veteran has medical follow-up, educate the patient regarding "red flags," and ensure the Veteran knows whom to contact if questions arise.

### H&CBC Services

- Home Base Primary Care (HBPC)
- Home Telehealth
- Purchased Skilled Home Care
- Outpatient Respite
- Home Hospice
- Homemaker/Home Health Aide
- Contract Adult Day Health Care
- Veterans Directed Home Care
- Contract Nursing Home
- Coordinated-Transitional Care

*OGJVAMC has a comprehensive Home and Community Based Care (H&CBC) program that provides needed services to enable Veterans to remain in their home setting as long as possible.*

## Health Care for Women Veterans

OGJVAMC and its seven community outpatient clinics offer clinically trained, gender specific health care providers to all female Veterans to ensure comprehensive care is available in a single visit.

OGJVAMC has continued to enhance its women's health programs in 2014.

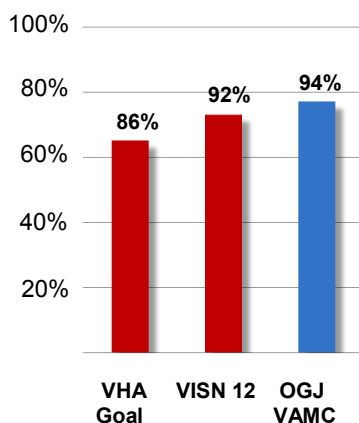
- Enrollment of female Veterans is increasing. In FY14, there were 1,335 female Veteran enrollees and 975 unique female Veteran users of the OGJ VA health care system. There were also 185 female CHAMP VA patients seen in FY14.
- Many gender specific health campaigns are conducted throughout the year including breast cancer awareness, women's heart health awareness, women's history month, and culture sensitivity campaigns.
- A full continuum of care for female Veterans includes: comprehensive primary and specialty care, mental health services, disease prevention and screening, and emergency care.
- Enhanced care coordination of VA maternity care and specialty services is offered through our non-VA care (purchased care) program.



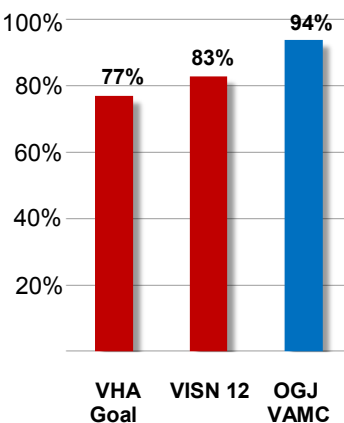
- OGJVAMC's women's health services have continued to demonstrate excellence in clinical practices. This is evidenced by the External Peer Review Program (EPRP) clinical measures in breast cancer and osteoporosis screenings (see below).
- A strategic plan was developed by an interdisciplinary team to guide the efforts of the Women's Health Services and to ensure the delivery of the highest quality, evidence-based, comprehensive health care to our female Veterans.

*For more information on Women Veterans Health Care, click on:*  
[www.womenshealth.va.gov](http://www.womenshealth.va.gov)

**Osteoporosis Screenings  
(age 65 and over)**



**Breast Cancer Screenings  
(age 50-74)**



### OGJVAMC & its 7 Community Outpatient Clinics:

- Served **1,160** female patients: 975 Veterans and 185 ChampVA spouses.

*A full continuum of care for female Veterans includes: comprehensive primary and specialty care, mental health services, disease prevention and screenings, and emergency care.*



## Peer Groups Impacting Recovery

Mental health recovery is a journey of healing and transformation enabling a person with a mental health problem to live a meaningful life in a community of his or her choice while striving to achieve his or her full potential (*Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)/Center for Mental Health Services*).

One of the effective treatments used today by OGJVAMC in its Mental Health Recovery program is peer led, peer support recovery groups. Peer support services in the VA are specifically designed to offer hope for recovery and role models for successful management of mental illness. Peer Support Providers help Veterans develop skills to manage their recovery, improve their quality of life, support their personal goals, and achieve independence from institutional settings.

At the end of Fiscal Year 2014, there are 63 Veterans participating in 10 Veteran peer groups that are hosted by the Oscar G. Johnson VA Medical Center, up from 18 Veterans and two peer groups at the end of Fiscal Year 2013. There are four types of peer groups hosted by OGJVAMC:

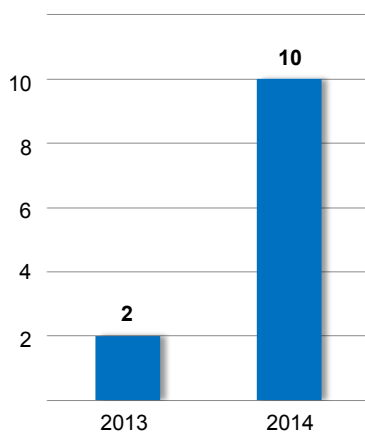
- **Peer Support Groups** normalize the Veterans' experience and let them know they are not alone. The group environment also

gives Veterans a chance to consider alternative behaviors and approaches to strengthen their recovery through artistic means.

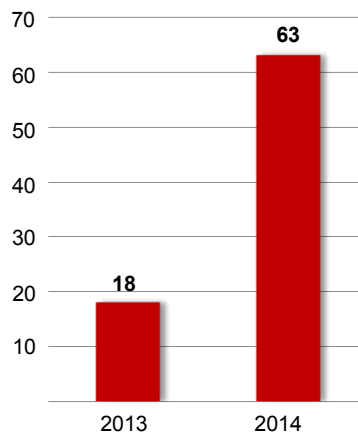
- **Peer Social Groups** integrate Veterans, many with a diagnosis of severe mental illness, into community events and activities who are struggling with social skills at a high level.
- **Creative Writing and Journaling Groups** normalizes the Veterans' experience and gives them a chance to consider alternative behaviors and approaches to strengthen their recovery through artistic means.
- **Peer Spouse Groups** are open to any spouse or significant other of a Veteran to help them better understand why at times a Veteran may do or react the way they do so that they may have a healthier spousal and familial relationship.

Studies have demonstrated the positive impact peer groups have in improving social functioning and quality of life for Veterans while reducing hospitalizations and use of crisis services. Veterans participating in peer groups are also engaged in individual therapy. Peer support groups and evidenced-based therapies are both part of the VA's mental health recovery model.

No. of Peer Groups



No. of Veterans in Peer Groups



### OGJVAMC Peer Groups:

- **7 Peer Support Groups:** Iron Mountain, Escanaba, and Menominee
- **1 Peer Social Group:** Iron Mountain
- **1 Writing/Journaling Group:** Iron Mountain
- **1 Peer Spouse Group:** Escanaba

*One of the effective treatments used today by OGJVAMC in its Mental Health Recovery Program is peer led, peer recovery groups.*

## Pharmacy Expands Services

OGJVAMC's Pharmacy Service has expanded services and improved efficiencies in FY2014. Services by Clinical Pharmacy Specialists have expanded in clinical program areas such as the Patient Aligned Care Teams (PACT, see page 14); mental health, anticoagulation, and Hepatitis C clinics; and the inpatient Antimicrobial Stewardship Program.

A Clinical Pharmacy Specialist has been assigned to the Behavioral Health Service, who sees patients directly and works with both the Veteran's primary care and mental health providers to manage his or her mental health medications. The Anticoagulation Clinic has adopted a panel management style for more efficient and consistent anticoagulation treatment for over 800 anticoagulation patients.

For patients served by OGJVAMC's Community Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOC), Clinical Pharmacy Specialists utilize tele-health technology to provide direct



patient care for medication management.

OGJVAMC implemented pharmacy tools and processes to improve efficiencies. A McKesson MedCarousel was installed to maintain appropriate inventory levels, provide a safety feature to ensure the correct medication is being filled, and improve efficiencies in procuring medications. A Script Pro Compact Robotic System (CRS) and an Eyecon automated counting machine was also installed, which has significantly reduced processing time for controlled substances and increased the accuracy of filling them. OGJVAMC is one of just a few VA medical centers in the country to have a McKesson MedCarousel, CRS and Eyecon.

The Pharmacy Service also initiated education campaigns to provide Veterans with more timely and accurate medication refills through VA's Audicare refill system and MyHealthVet, a website for Veterans to manage their VA health care.



*OGJVAMC's is one of just a few VA medical centers in the country to have a McKesson MedCarousel, a Script Pro Compact Robotic System (CRS), and an Eyecon automated counting machine to significantly reduce processing time for controlled substances.*



## Overcoming Transportation Barriers

OGJVMC's Veterans Transportation Service (VTS) is designed to overcome barriers to accessing VA health care by increasing transportation resources and options. This not only includes VA owned resources but also those from Veteran Service Organizations and community transportation services as well. While this free service is available to all Veterans, it is particularly targeted for Veterans who are visually impaired, elderly, or immobilized due to disease or disability, and those living in rural and highly rural areas.

Currently, the VTS program at OGJVMC consists of two 16 passenger vans accommodating oxygen tanks and up to three wheel chairs each; seven van routes operated by volunteers from the Disabled American Veterans (DAV); and one coach bus for bi-weekly trips to Milwaukee VAMC for specialty care treatment.

Each VA bus carries a Certified Nursing Assistant to provide care to Veterans as necessary.

"As the VTS program continues into the fourth year of operations, its value to Veterans is undeniable," said Kevin Reisz, OGJVMC VTS Coordinator. "VTS is a service designed to provide all Veterans with convenient and timely transportation who otherwise would not have access to health care."

*Once scheduled for a medical appointment, Veterans needing transportation should call the VTS Coordinator at 1-800-215-8262, extension 33849 to set up travel arrangements (on a first come-first serve basis) or to be referred to the most efficient means of travel from their location.*



2,932  
Trips

101,455  
Miles

1,510  
Veterans  
served



102  
Trips to  
Milwaukee

1,947  
Veterans  
served



7  
DAV Routes

288,566  
Miles

2,606  
Veterans  
served



## Taking Care of Returning Soldiers

### OEF/OIF/OND

OGJVAMC's Operation Enduring Freedom/Operation Iraqi Freedom/Operation New Dawn (OEF/OIF/OND) program has been active for more than eight years.

The OEF/OIF/OND team works in conjunction with the Escanaba Vet Center and other VA offices to reach out to military personnel returning from operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, and assisting them in making a seamless transition back to their family and communities and to VA health care.

The team provides important benefit and enrollment information regarding VA health care to Veterans returning to OGJVAMC's geographic area. They help combat Veterans reintegrate into their communities and civilian life.



The team's other responsibilities include coordinating the continuity of ambulatory and inpatient care upon discharge or transfer from military hospitals and assessing all newly enrolled OEF/OIF/OND Veterans for community resource needs and care management.

### Escanaba Vet Center

The VA Vet Center in Escanaba, MI is one of 300 nationwide, serving Veterans in rural and underserved areas. Its primary mission is to help combat Veterans and Veterans who have been victims of military sexual trauma readjust to civilian life. This is done by helping the Veteran identify problems and then offering individual, family, and group counseling for a host of issues including Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), military sexual trauma, substance abuse and bereavement.

The Mobile Vet Center (MVC) takes the Vet Center mission on the road, going wherever needed to serve Veterans. The internet satellite and onboard generator assures that Vet Center counselors will have real time access to the Veteran's VA records on a secure system. A video conferencing system allows face-to-face visits between the Veteran and a VA health provider for such things as medication management. *For more information click:* [www.oefoif.va.gov](http://www.oefoif.va.gov).

*The OEF/OIF/OND team works in conjunction with the Escanaba Vet Center and other VA offices to reach out to military personnel returning from operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, and assisting them in making a seamless transition back to their family, communities and VA health care.*



## Ending Veteran Homelessness

OGJVMAC's Homeless Prevention Team continues to work with community partners to end homelessness among Veterans. OGJVMAC's Health Care for Homeless Veterans (HCHV) program is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) to provide case management services and community referral services to Veterans throughout the OGJVMAC patient service area. HCHV staff served 174 Veterans in FY2014.

### Housing Assistance

OGJVMAC's HCHV staff work closely with community partners in order to identify resources available within the community. Since 2011, OGJVMAC has partnered with the Great Lakes Residential Recovery Center, located in Marquette, Michigan, to provide contract transitional housing services to homeless Veterans. This program served 22 Veterans in FY2014. The HCHV program also assists Veterans with referral and coordination of services in order to obtain and maintain independent living within the community. The VA, in partnership

with the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), provides vouchers to subsidize rental housing for homeless Veterans and their immediate families in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. OGJVMAC assisted 15 families with obtaining or maintaining independent living utilizing a HUD-VASH voucher.

### National Veteran Homeless Call Center

The VA established the National Call Center for Homeless Veterans hotline to ensure that homeless Veterans or Veterans at-risk for homelessness have free, 24/7 access to trained counselors. OGJVMAC's HCHV staff addressed 53 crisis calls to the National Veteran Homeless Call Center.

*Homeless or at risk Veterans can call the National Call Center for Homeless Veterans at: 1-877-4AID-VET (1-877-424-3838).*

### Homeless or At Risk Veterans - 2014

- **174** Veterans served
- **22** using Contract Transitional Housing
- **15** using HUD-VASH vouchers
- **102** homeless
- **178** at risk of homelessness.
- **53** called National Veteran Homeless Call Center

## OGJVMAC Hosts Mental Health Summit

OGJVMAC held the second annual informational Mental Health Summit on July 29, 2014. The purpose for the summit was to bring together key stakeholders in the local community



with the goal of enhancing access to mental health services and addressing the mental health care needs of Veterans and their family members.

Key topics discussed included a demonstration of the National Resource Directory, focusing on Veterans' families, Veteran caregiver and peer support programs, employment and homelessness, and military cultural competence.

The Summit was well attended by OGJVMAC's community partners, Veterans, family members, and VA staff.

## Reaching out to Vets and Stakeholders

Two years ago, OGJVAMC made outreach to Veterans and partner stakeholders a strategic priority. To accomplish this, two multidisciplinary Outreach Teams were chartered: one team to reach out to Veterans and their families, and a second team to reach out to regional hospitals that provide non-VA care to VHA-enrolled Veterans.

### Veteran Outreach Team

The Veteran Outreach Team was chartered to increase awareness of benefits and services, promote VA's high quality of care, receive feedback on Veteran's needs and services, and address access gaps. The team included representatives from Nursing, Behavioral Health, Women's Health, Patient Administrative Service, and Public Affairs.

Working with local Veteran Service Officers, Veteran service organizations, and tribal and community representatives, the Outreach Team coordinated and participated in 35 outreach events in FY2014, including five at area tribal nations, with a potential outreach to over 5,500 people. These



events included 13 health benefit fairs, six OGJVAMC-hosted Veteran Town Halls, and 16 presentations at Veteran events and to community and Veteran organizational stakeholders.

### Clinical Outreach Team

The Clinical Outreach Team was chartered to address the problems of disjointed coordination of care and lack of understanding of VA terminology and procedures with various regional hospitals. These problems resulted in extended stays beyond patient stabilization, increasing cost to the Veterans.

The team is comprised of representatives from Nursing, Utilization Management, Non-VA Care Coordination, and Patient Administrative Service. They developed a presentation that described VHA services, legal authorities, eligibility requirements, definitions of key terms, and procedures for coordinating care with the VA. It also provided scenarios to illustrate proper coordination of care.



*Working with local Veteran Service Officers, Veteran service organizations, and tribal and community representatives, the Outreach Team coordinated and participated in 35 outreach events in FY2014.*



## Students Learn About VA Careers

The Oscar G. Johnson VA Medical Center hosted 250 high school juniors from the Kingsford, Iron Mountain and Norway High Schools as well as Bay College students May 13-14, 2014, for its third annual VA Career Day, where the students tour the medical center and get a first-hand look at VA careers.

After a facility tour, students were able to browse up to 14 career booths. Students were exposed to a variety of professions including social work, nursing, physician, pathology and laboratory, rehabilitation medicine, engineering, computer/IT, law enforcement, human resources, biomedical technology, health care management, and finance.



Students participated in hands-on demonstrations such as checking vitals of a fully computerized, life-like patient mannequin.

“People think the VA hospital only has medical careers; they don’t realize there’s all different kinds of careers that make up this facility,” said Iron Mountain High School Counselor Ruth Truscott.

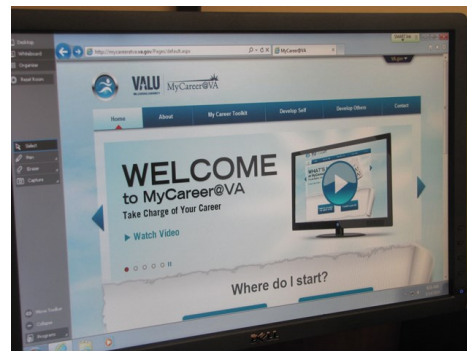


This was the second VA career fair for Kingsford science teacher, Lisa Hosie.

“This group of juniors was looking forward to this based on what they heard from this year’s seniors who attended last year,” said Hosie. “They were hearing how this career fair helped some of them find direction,” she added.

Thirty VA employees participated in this VA Career Day giving students a tour of the medical center or showing students what they do and what type of education was needed to accomplish their goals.

To see more photos of this event please [click here!](#)



*“People think the VA hospital only has medical careers; they don’t realize there’s all different kinds of careers that make up this facility.”*

*~ Ruth Truscott, Iron Mountain High School Counselor*

## The Veterans Information Hour

Since December of 2011, OGJVAMC has partnered with WJNR Radio, 101.5 FM, and the local Dickinson County Veteran Service Officer (VSO) for a monthly live radio show called *Veterans Information Hour*. Hosted by long time radio personality Aaron Harper and VSO Chuck Lantz, the medical center has provided subject matter experts each month to talk about the various benefits and services on the one-hour, live broadcast. Both Aaron and Chuck, Vietnam and Desert Storm Veterans respectively, are both users and strong supporters of OGJVAMC.



Chuck Lantz, Brad Nelson (OGJVAMC PAO), and Aaron Harper with First Place trophy for VHA's Innovation Award.

The *Veterans Information Hour* won First Place for Innovation in the 2014 Veterans Health Administration Communications Awards. Check out the 2014 guests and topics below.



Mental Health Summit



Homeless Veterans Program



Veterans Justice Outreach



Nutrition



MyHealtheVet



Women Veterans Program and Military Sexual Trauma



Flu Shots

**Programs Not Pictured:**

- Home & Community Based Care
- VA Audit Results & Outreach Efforts
- New VA Choice Card Program

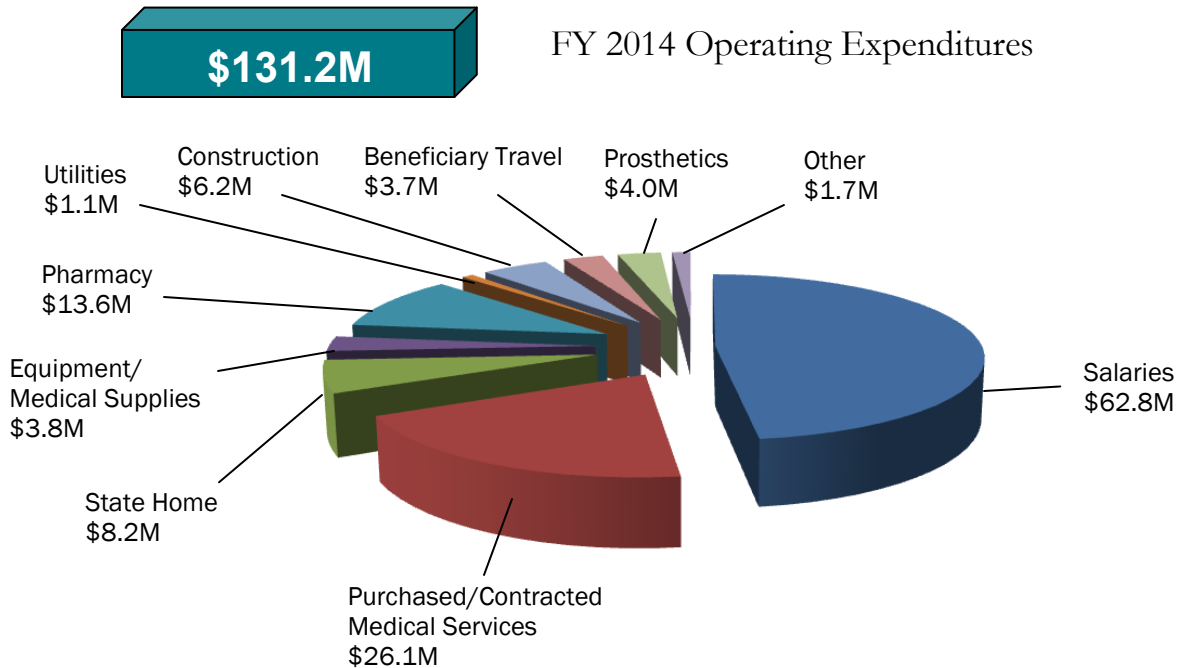


*OGJVAMC partners with WJNR Radio, 101.5 FM, and the local Dickinson County Veteran Service Officer for a monthly live radio show called Veterans Information Hour.*

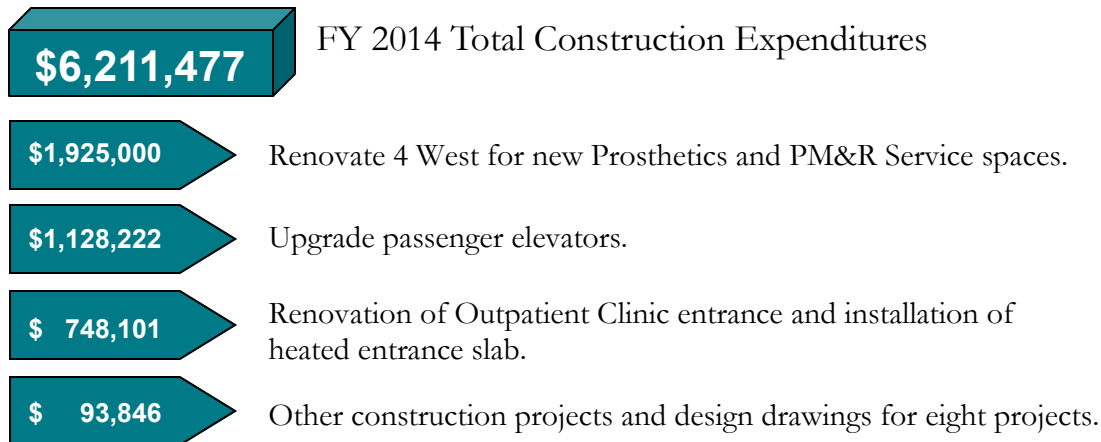


# Financial Summary

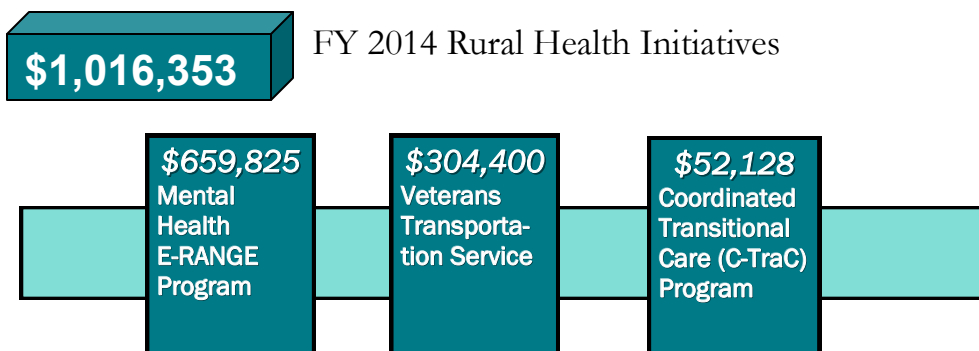
## Operating Expenditures



## Construction Expenditures



## Rural Health Expenditures



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